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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2569

July 31, 1992

AgResearch Branch

NEW STARCH-BASED PESTICIDE -- Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan has announced the licensing of the first starch-coated pesticides designed to stick to the leaves of plants. This new technology promises to reduce the risk of contamination of groundwater and trim pest-control costs. "The process puts the pesticide where the bugs will eat it and keeps it there longer," Madigan says. The new technology was invented by Baruch S. Shasha and Michael R. McGuire, both with USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Peoria, Ill. Contact: Marcie Gerriets (309) 685-4011.

RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM -- The Association of Research Directors of 1890 Land Grant Colleges and Universities will sponsor their Ninth Biennial Research Symposium Oct. 4 through 8 in Atlanta, Ga. The theme for this 1992 symposium is "1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities: An Investment for the 21st Century." Papers will be presented in four major areas: animal science, food science and human nutrition, plant and soil science and rural development. Contact: Charles A. Panton (919) 334-7612.

TARGETING FARMERS WITH DISABILITIES -- With determination and a little assistance from a USDA program, farmers with disabilities can continue doing what they enjoy -- farming. USDA's AgrAbility Project reflects the program's goal of enabling ag workers with disabilities to improve their capabilities in farming and ranching, says Myron D. Johnsrud, administrator of USDA's Extension Service. Designed to educate and help farmers with disabilities, the project supplies farmers with information on worksite and home modifications that accommodates their disabilities, whether physical or mental. Contact: Charles M. Morgan (202) 690-3656.

RED MEAT PRODUCTION SETS RECORD -- Commercial red meat production for the U.S. in June set a record high -- 3.42 billion pounds. This production figure is 12 percent above a year earlier and 2 percent above the previous June record of 3.34 billion pounds, which was set in 1989. Pork production, at 1.33 billion pounds, surpassed the previous June record of 1.31 billion pounds set in 1980. Contact: Linda Simpson (202) 720-3578.

USDA WORKS TO PREVENT HORSE ILLNESS -- USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is investigating the cause of an outbreak of an unidentified horse viral illness at race tracks in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. To halt the spread of the disease, race tracks in the affected states have been quarantined. Some other states not affected by the illness have imposed temporary restrictions on horses. Symptoms of the illness include: swollen limbs, muscle soreness and high fever. Contact: Kendra Pratt (301) 436-6573.

AG MUSEUM -- The New Jersey Museum of Agriculture has been open just over a year, but its collections reflect the panorama of New Jersey's long history. Museum exhibits begin with the Lenape Indians before Columbus. The museum also provides a unique look at agriculture in all its aspects. Contact: Jennifer Martin (908) 249-2077.

GLOBAL CHANGE AND INSECTS -- Some insect and weed pests' ability to damage crops could be boosted if carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere increase, says USDA plant physiologist David Patterson. Patterson says research indicates that increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and potential global climate changes can alter growth rates, distribution and agricultural impact of weeds and insect pests. "Some, but certainly not all weeds or insects will gain a competitive edge due to carbon dioxide increases and possible greenhouse effects," Patterson says. "Others may lose ground." Contact: David T. Patterson (929) 684-6523.

CATFISH PROCESSING UP 17 PERCENT -- Farm-raised catfish processed during June totaled 36.8 million pounds round weight, up 17 percent from June 1991. During June, producers sold 18.9 million pounds of processed fish, an increase of 18 percent from a year earlier. The June average prices received by processors for whole fish were \$1.33 per pound for ice pack and \$1.58 for frozen fish. Contact: Joel Moore (202) 720-3244.

FARM MILK PRICES -- Farm milk prices in 1992 are expected to average more than \$1 above a year earlier and only slightly below 1989 and 1990 prices, USDA economists say. Skim and whole milk markets were tight this spring and early summer. Fairly steady milk output, strengthening domestic demand for cheese and skim products, and Dairy Export Incentive Program contracts for dry milk exports led to sharp April-May rises in wholesale prices of nonfat dry milk and cheese. Contact: Jim Miller (202) 219-0770.

CHINA OUTLOOK -- China's total grain output in 1992 is projected to decline to 430 million tons because of lower planted acreage. China's 1991 grain output fell to 435 million tons, down 2.5 percent from the record 446 million tons in 1990. China's target for 1992 is 435 million tons. Consecutive good grain harvests in 1990 and 1991 boosted domestic corn supplies, resulting in no corn imports in 1990/91 and none projected for 1991/92 and 1992/93. Contact: W. Hunter Colby (202) 219-2916.

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FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1834 -- On this edition of Agriculture USA, Doug Wakefield and representatives of USDA's Forest Service talk about how fighting forest fires has changed over the years. (Weekly reel--13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1316 -- Finding a lawn care company; gardening in the desert; the cigar's fading glory; preserving photographs; consumer rip-off: protecting yourself. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS AND FEATURES #1825 -- USDA News Highlights; farm stored grain, rules and regs; new pesticides on the way; CO2 and weeds; breeding aflatoxin resistant corn. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1531 -- Tenderness technique; calcium boost; world food price; nickel's worth; essential nutrients for plants. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., Aug. 10, vegetable production report; Tue., Aug 11, weather and crop update; Wed., Aug. 12, ag. supply and demand, U.S. crop production; Thurs., Aug. 13, world ag/grain outlook, world oilseed situation, world cotton situation; Fri., Aug. 14, livestock outlook, milk production. (These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on the new apple season; Will Pemble reports on detecting seed viability; DeBoria Janifer reports on the U.S. rice crop; Dave Luciani takes a look at Michigan's cherry crop.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA meteorologist Norton Strommen takes a look at weather and crops; USDA economist Sara Short on the dairy outlook.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- DeBoria Janifer reports on urban gardening; Pat O'Leary reports on agriculture facts; John Snyder reports on farm-raised shrimp imports.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- Agriculture Update, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE...of the tobacco crop to North Carolina was covered in a one-hour special on the opening of the markets in all three tobacco belts in the state, says John Spence (WNCT-TV, Greenville). The program also featured interviews with local business leaders on the expected increase in economic activity. John says he broadcast his noon show live from the tobacco warehouse.

DRY CONDITIONS...in the west are reflected in the large increase in wildfires, 61,000 this year compared to 39,000 at this time last year, says Arnold Hartigan (Boise Interagency Fire Center, Boise, Idaho). Seventy-five percent of all range fires and 60 percent of all forest fires are started by dry lightning, storms in which the rain evaporates before reaching the ground. For an update on fire conditions and statistics call Arnold at (208) 389-2457.

CONGRATULATIONS...to Les Leonard (Goetz Farm Radio Network, Marshfield, Wisc.). He has been named to the Wisconsin Broadcasters Hall of Fame. Les has been covering the farm beat since 1953. He currently serves as the network's senior farm director.

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NEW VOICE...on KVOO, Tulsa, Okla., is Carey Martin, formerly of the Louisiana Agri-News Network, Baton Rouge. Carey says the station's farm department is new and KVOO's 50,000 watt signal extends over a lot of acreage. Seven programs are broadcast daily. Positive response by listeners has prompted plans to increase the schedule to eight.

UPDATE...on Jack Towers (USDA broadcasting, retired). In a recent BILLBOARD article Jack was termed a "master restorer." In his basement studio at home, Jack transfers and restores the recordings of classic jazz artists. He's been involved in a large number of reissue projects from the pre-tape era. The Towers process eliminates the pops and clicks and otherwise cleans the sound, breathing new life into old recordings. He is up to his ears in work that he enjoys. Thanks to Layne Beaty (USDA R-TV chief, retired) for the information.

Vic Powell

VIC POWELL
 Chief, Radio and TV Division